Registering Ideology in the Creation of Social Entrepreneurs: Intermediary Organizations, 'Ideal Subject' and the Promise of Enjoyment

Pascal Dey, Dr. University of St. Gallen Institute for Business Ethics Tannenstrasse 19 9000 St.Gallen Pascal.dey@unisg.ch +41-79-710-9337	Othmar Lehner, Dr. University of Oxford Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment South Parks Road Oxford, OX1 3QY Othmar.lehner@sbs.ox.ac.uk

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Pascal Dey and Othmar M Lehner

Abstract Research on social entrepreneurship has taken an increasing interest in issues pertaining to ideology. In contrast to existing research which tends to couch 'ideology' in pejorative terms (i.e. something which needs to be overcome), this paper conceives of ideology as a key mechanism for rendering social entrepreneurship an object with which people can identify. Specifically, drawing on qualitative research of one of the most prolific social entrepreneurship intermediaries, the Impact Hub, we investigate how social entrepreneurship is narrated as an 'ideal subject' which signals toward others what it takes to lead a meaningful (working) life. Taking its theoretical cues from Luc Boltanski's theory of justification and from recent affect-based theorizing on ideology, our findings indicate that becoming a social entrepreneur gets framed less as a matter of struggle, hardship and perseverance than of 'having fun'. We caution that the promise of enjoyment which pervades portrayals of the social entrepreneur might cultivate a passive attitude of empty 'pleasure' which effectively forecloses the properly political. The paper concludes by discussing the broader implications this hedonistic rendition of social entrepreneurship has, thus suggesting a re-politicization of social entrepreneurship through a confronting with the 'impossible'.

Key words social entrepreneurship; ideology; ideal subject; affect; enjoyment; narratives; the Impact Hub

Introduction

More than a decade ago, when the buzz around social entrepreneurship was in full swing, Raymond Dart (2004) put forward a thought-provoking investigation of the legitimacy of social entrepreneurship. The main point advanced by Dart is that the legitimacy of social entrepreneurship was morally and not pragmatically based; that is, social entrepreneurship has morphed into a legitimate organizational form not necessarily because it stood the test of reality (read 'it works!'), but because it was normatively connected to the dominant pro-business ideology which sees market-based approaches as the only pertinent way of addressing social and ecological problems. Hence, what is at stake in Dart's treaties on legitimacy is that social entrepreneurship is more an ideological creation than a robust (i.e. empirically validated) way of using market mechanisms to advance the common good. The observation of social entrepreneurship being an ideological creation is still timely, especially during a time which is so vehemently depicted as 'post-ideological' (Bell, 2000). It is thus one of the merits of Dart's investigation to have cultivated sensitivity that the appeal of social entrepreneurship is due in no small part to its kinship with the hegemonic pro-business ideology (Eikenberry, 2009).

Though we agree with many of Dart's assertions, we also believe that he too readily subsumes social entrepreneurship to a singular ideology. This is to deny that social entrepreneurship in many ways forms a response to the 'global crisis of value'. Consider, as an example, how Harvard-based management guru Michael Porter recently employed social entrepreneurship to prefigure an alternative economy which suspends the dogmatic share-holder ideology by identifying the fulfillment of social needs as a core-value of doing business (Driver, 2012). Or think of how social entrepreneurship has been portrayed as a hybrid organization which combines philanthropic and market ideologies in largely productive ways (Moss et al., 2011). These cursory examples indicate that social entrepreneurship is not necessarily reducing the domain of ideological values to a singular logic. Since even though commentators keep accusing social entrepreneurship research of being too wedded to the managerial ideology (Eikenberry, 2009; Hjorth, 2009; 2013; Jones & Murtola, 2012), we are reluctant to embrace this diagnosis uncritically. Social entrepreneurship often serves as a conceptual reference for 'talking back' to the hegemony of the pro-business ideology, whilst proving that alternative ideological standards of economic organizing are available. Arguably one of the most influential actors in transmitting what social entrepreneurship is and what it is capable of accomplishing are intermediary organizations such as Ashoka, the Schwab Foundation, the Unreasonable Institute or GoodCompany. Intermediary organization, alternatively referred to as promotion agencies, incubators or 'field building actors' (Nicholls, 2010), are highly effective in shaping the meaning of social entrepreneurship, and, importantly, in mediating the experience of nascent and early-stage social entrepreneurs. Consequently, aspiring to advance understanding of the ideologies intermediary organizations invoke to prompt others to think and act in particular ways, we revert to the Impact Hub as one of the most successful actors in advancing the cause of social entrepreneurship on a global scale. The focal attention is on how the Impact Hub employs social entrepreneurship as an exemplary account of what it takes to lead a virtuous (working) life. Specifically, we shed light on how the Impact Hub interweaves different ideologies to establish a relatively coherent, temporarily stable sense of social entrepreneurship as an 'ideal subject'. An ideal subject thus forms a moral guide or yardstick which offers potential social entrepreneurs a sense of direction in their quest for greatness. In conducting our analysis, we rely upon the sociological work of Luc Boltanski (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005; Botlanski & Thévenot, 2006) which permits us to distinguish a total of seven generic ideologies that contain different justifications of how a 'state of greatness' can be achieved. Further, our investigation is predicated on the idea that any attempt at understanding the narration of social entrepreneurship as an ideal subject would be incomplete without consideration of the dimension of affect. Conceiving of affect as the beatific narratives which render a given ideology compelling (Glynos et al., 2012; Stavrakskis, 2008), we study how the Impact Hub interweaves such narratives to create a belief that becoming a social entrepreneur will eventually make life not only meaningful but also enjoyable.

The remainder of the paper proceeds as follows. After highlighting how 'ideology' has been used in previous research on social entrepreneurship, we conceptualize our own understanding of the term. After introducing our methodology and empirical case, we investigate how the intermediary organization narrates social entrepreneurship as an ideal subject which combines meaningfulness with the ability to enjoy. Taking issue with the

hedonistic rendition of social entrepreneurship, we conclude with a plea to re-think social entrepreneurship as a confrontation with the 'impossible'.

'Ideology' in Existing Research on Social Entrepreneurship

Ideology has acquired increasing prominence in recent years as a means by which to examine and understand entrepreneurship as a politically shaped object of knowledge (notably Jones and Spicer, 2010; Ogbor, 2000). More recently, ideology has also been endorsed as a subject of study in the realm of social entrepreneurship research. There, ideology has been foundational to the critical turn that took place toward the end of the 2000s (e.g. Boddice, 2009; Curtis, 2007; Dey & Teasdale, 2013; Mason, 2012). It probably goes without saying that the meaning of the term 'ideology' in existing research is quite heterogeneous. For instance, some critically inclined investigations have approached social entrepreneurship as a distinct ideology which, due to its commitment to values pertaining to the market sphere, engenders the commercialization of non-profit organizations (Eikenberry, 2009; Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004). In a similar vein, studies have looked at how the ideology of social entrepreneurship, being transmitted by various powerful actors such as policy makers, the media or academia, 'impinges' upon how practitioners think and act (e.g. Dempsey & Sanders, 2010; Dey & Steyaert, 2014; Levander, 2010). Exemplary in this regard is the investigation by Dempsey and Sanders (2010) which, based on a detailed analysis of autobiographies of successful social entrepreneurs, showed how iconic narratives normalize an understanding of meaningful work predicated upon notions of sleep deprivation, lack of spare time, inexistent personal life, long working hours. Another stream of research has studied how social entrepreneurship operates as part of a work of ideological imagination that shapes reality according to distinct political dogmas. Instructive in this regard is the work of Mason and Moran (forthcoming) which concerns itself with the specific role of social entrepreneurship in the English coalition government's Big Society program. While officially touted as an effective means for unleashing civil society's engagement in solving pressing societal problems, the authors maintain that the prime ideological function of social entrepreneurship is to abet cut-backs in essential public services. The focal attention of this research is how government actors use ideology to conceal the true aspirations underpinning their use of 'social entrepreneurship'. This research is notable for how it raises awareness that social entrepreneurship is not necessarily a value-neural means for tackling social/ecological problems, but an ideological justification of a particular way of seeing things, and, by extension, a 'censorship' mechanism which forecloses certain understandings of the world (Dey, 2014).

Despite the divergences among these different usages of 'ideology', there are some broad areas of overlap. Underlying virtually all of this research is the assumption that ideology works mainly to conceal the antinomy between ideological representations of social entrepreneurship and actual reality. The basic thinking thus is that ideological renditions of social entrepreneurship work primarily to veil the true nature of reality, hence forming a "distortion of communication, a disturbance to be eliminated" (Žižek, 1994, pp. 63-64). Evidently, ideology gets used mainly in a pejorative sense (Andersson, 2011). Such a negative exegesis fails to understand that ideology is a fundamental principle in securing social consent and harmony, and thus part and parcel of all functioning societies. Given that social

entrepreneurship scholars mainly connote 'ideology' in a negative sense, this prompts us to call for research which concerns itself with how ideology creates, rather than veils realities and subjects. Consequently, we in this paper adopt an affirmative outlook which conceives of ideology as a central mechanism for offering individuals an exciting model of their own potential and a moral justification of their role within society. Denoting ideology's function in relation to assigning meaning to their experience of becoming a particular kind of being, the issue that we are going to address going forward is how ideology works to enact social entrepreneurship as an ideal subject which signals toward others how they can attain a virtuous life.

Conceptualizing Ideology: Ideal Subject, Narratives and Affect

Our conceptualization of ideology is stimulated by three basic considerations. First, ideology works to create 'ideal subjects'. Second, narratives form the medium through which ideologies are interwoven into a relatively coherent, temporarily stable sense of how social entrepreneurs typically think and act. Third, the creation of an ideal subject through ideology involves two dimensions: signification (the level of meaning) and affect (the level of enjoyment).

Concurring with Althusser (1971) that "all ideology has the function of 'constituting' concrete individuals into subjects" (p. 115), this paper thrives on the contention that ideology works primarily to shape the way people conduct themselves by suggesting particular normative orientations of what it means to lead a 'good life'. To develop our argument, we invoke the notion of 'ideal subject' (alternatively referred to as 'ideal self'; e.g. Wieland, 2010) which comprises the process of putting in place a model of how individuals should ideally act and think. Ideal subject formulates a model of being which others can (and indeed should) emulate. Ideal subject in the present context is thought of as an exemplary construction of how social entrepreneurs typically think and act. A distinctive feature of ideal subject is its compulsive aspect: individuals who are addressed as social entrepreneurs are not simply free to immerse themselves in a social entrepreneurial career, but morally obliged to accept social entrepreneurship as their 'true self' (Dey & Steyaert, 2014).

Expanding on Althusser's subject-based rendition of ideology, we conceive of the creation of ideal subjects as being essentially a narrative accomplishment. Embracing Hall's (1983) contention that the world is rendered meaningful via a process of language-mediated symbolization, we view narratives as determining what forms of subjects become imaginable and, conversely, unimaginable. Narratives can thereby take on different forms, such as rituals, myths, movie clips, blog and home-page entries or mundane conversations. Ideology thus pertains to the evaluative dimension underpinning particular narratives (Jameson, 1977). Ideologies are often not recognizable as ideology precisely since being rooted in our "'everyday thinking' which offers us frameworks of meaning with which to make sense of the world" (Hall & O'Shea, 2013, p. 9). The work of French sociologist Luc Boltanski is instructive for distinguishing different common sense ideologies upon which ideal subjects ultimately get based. Two texts by Boltanski are particularly relevant: in *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005) and *On Justification* (Boltanski & Thévenaut, 2006) Boltanski develops – based on a study of respectively canonical texts from political philosophy and management textbooks – an axiological matrix which identifies a total of seven ideological

'regimes' labeled respectively the inspirational, domestic, renown, civic, market, industrial, and projective regime (for details cf. Table 1).

Table 1 Spectrum of ideological regimes according to Boltanski

Ideological Regimes	*The regime of inspiration* ... emphasizes creativity and originality. The regime of inspiration stresses the accomplishment of the individual, not that of social collectives or society at large.
	The domestic regime ...pertains mostly to the private sphere, particularly to the family. As such, the domestic regime emphasizes issues such as hierarchy, tradition and intimate social ties.
	The regime of opinion ... homes in on the fame, recognition and dignity of human beings in public space. The regime of opinion thus stresses the ability to influence and attract others.
	The civic regime ... stresses values of solidarity and respect. The principle value of the civic regime is justice.
	The market regime ... concerns itself with buying-selling and competition. The main value of the market regime is profit.
	The industrial regime ... puts technical and scientific approaches center stage. The key values of the industrial regime are performance and productivity.
	The projective regime ... primarily stresses the value of flexibility as epitomized in how network organizations structure their activities around projects.

These regimes entail different justifications concerning what it takes to achieve a 'state of greatness'. They offer justifications of why a certain life-style is meaningful, morally sound or intellectually sensible. For us to get at the core of how social entrepreneurship is justified as an ideal subject which others must emulate, we draw on Boltanski and Chiapello (2005) to distinguish three basic patterns of justification: the first patterns (the security dimension) entails arguments emphasizing how individuals who engage as social entrepreneurs can provide be secured or secure themselves from impending risks. The second pattern (the fairness dimension) indicates how one's engagement as a social entrepreneur can contribute to the common good. The third pattern (the excitement dimension) clarifies what is 'stimulating' about an involvement as a social entrepreneur.

Whilst Boltanski permits us to grasp the semantic dimension (i.e. the level of meaning) of ideology, we assert that any attempt at understanding the ideological 'grip' of

social entrepreneurship would be insufficient without consideration of the dimension of affect. Drawing on affect-based theorizing on ideology (Glynos, 2001, 2008; Glynos et al., 2012; Stavrakakis, 2008; Žižek, 1989, 1994, 1999), we assert that the creation of an ideal subject, to be pervasive, presupposes affect as the medium which makes a particular story compelling. An affective view does not so much point toward a sphere or experience outside ideology, but to those aspects of a given ideology which make this ideology 'stick'. Affect gives ideology power by sketching out a sublime reality with which individuals can identify (Žižek, 1989). The guiding idea is that ideology has a fantasmatic dimension whose primary function is to make a given reality (such as social entrepreneurship) palatable by endowing it with a sense of harmony, fullness and enjoyment. Without this fantasy, ideology does not function (Žižek, 1989). As Glynos et al. (2012) maintain, ideology's sense of enjoyment is expressed mostly through fantasies that interweave beatific and horrific narratives. Such affective narratives restore the belief in the possibility (of a future state) of harmony and fulfillment. By way of illustration, affect is ubiquitous in "moralizing literature that talks of a marvelous world which no one has ever really encountered" (Chiapello, 2003, p. 169) but which social entrepreneurs can possibly bring about. Moreover, portrayals of social entrepreneurship based upon charismatic individuals (Vasi, 2009) comprise an affective core which is palpable in how these narratives offer individuals (read potential social entrepreneurs) "attractive, exciting life prospects" (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005, pp. 24-25). The important thing to note about affect is not whether a given narrative is true or not with regard to its positive content (Žižek, 1994), but how it tries to compel individuals to identify with the narrative's normative desideratum, thus making them think and act in a particular way.

Applying this conceptualization of ideology to study how intermediary organizations establish social entrepreneurship as an ideal subject, we address the following interrelated questions.

1. First, we ask which ideological regimes are invoked in the narratives of the Impact Hub to assign meaning to the experience of becoming a social entrepreneur.
2. Second, we ask how the ideal subject of becoming a social entrepreneur is justified through recourse to arguments pertaining to security, fairness and excitement.
3. Third, we ask how the ideal subject of becoming a social entrepreneur is made compelling through affective investments.

Before presenting our findings, we will sketch out the methodological approach of our inquiry.

Methodological Approach

Case Overview

Our investigation is based upon a single-site case study of the Impact Hub. The choice of the Impact Hub was purposive in that we believed that it represents one of the most influential intermediary organizations in promoting the cause of social entrepreneurship world-wide. The first Hub was founded in London in 2005, and has since then morphed into a global movement. While writing this article, the Hub Impact purportedly consisted of more than 11'000 members, and 60 hubs distributed all over the world. Whilst aspiring to create the conditions that are conducive to the set-up of social entrepreneurial organizations, the Impact

Hub uses various measures, such as workshops, venture competitions, fellowship programs, prototyping sessions and spaces for 'creative breakout, brainstorming and co-working', to attain its objectives. What interested us most in our study were less the specific measures the Impact Hub employs to select, educate and coach individuals who have already expressed their desire to become social entrepreneurs. Instead, our main interest was on how the Impact Hub gives a general account to outsiders specifying how engagement in social entrepreneurship makes (working) life both meaningful and appealing.

Data Gathering and Analytic Procedure

Our analysis was based upon official narratives of social entrepreneurship produced and disseminated by the Impact Hub. The choice of publically available accounts is premised on the idea that such accounts contain the Impact Hub's official understanding of social entrepreneurship which it deliberately uses to instill in individuals a desire become social entrepreneurs. Data gathering involved a systematic selection and storage of publically available narratives of social entrepreneurship as they occur on the Impact Hub's homepage, PowerPoint presentations, annual and impact reports, promotion material, event flyers, movies, or photographic material. Narratives were collected between October 2012 and June 2014. Our primary data set included 590 sources of text, which were stored in a Dropbox folder to guarantee access by the two authors. The two authors iteratively analyzed the data between October 2013 and September 2014.

Our analysis proceeded in four steps. The first step involved the identification of text passages which explicitly dealt with social entrepreneurship. To this end, we read through the whole data set and inductively generated a list of 18 categories, involving headings such as 'inspiring', 'impact', 'measurement', 'business', 'purpose', etc. We thereby relied upon the coding method suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1990). The 18 categories, which were consensually negotiated between the two authors, were all entered into NVIVO software. The second step consisted of linking the 18 categories to the seven ideological registers suggested by Boltanski. With one exemption (i.e. the hedonistic regime, which will be discussed more thoroughly in the findings section), this matching was rather straightforward. This step symbolized the transition from the empirical, first-order narratives of the Impact Hub (i.e. the emic dimension of our research) to the etic part of our research which aspired to reflect the inductive insights through the prism of established knowledge (Morris et al., 1999). To identify the affective dynamic of the Impact Hub's narratives, we in a third step closely read the texts with an eye on affective segments which make a given account compelling. This step calls attention to the often latent operation of fantasies in the official narrative of the Impact Hub, and how they worked to render social entrepreneurship appealing to the individual. The last step, then, consisted of writing up the case narrative, with particular emphasis being placed on the kind of ideal subject being constructed. To present our findings, we first present the case narrative along Boltanski and Chiapello's (2005) three levels of ideological justification: the security dimension, the fairness dimension and the excitement dimension. Then, in a subsequent section, we problematize our findings by relating them to existing research on the 'society of command enjoyment'.

Findings

Narrating Social Entrepreneurship as Ideal Subject

Truthful to its role as a social entrepreneurship promotion agency, the Impact Hub relies upon a progressive story which sketches out why others should become a particular kind of subject, that is, a social entrepreneur. As part of this, social entrepreneurship gets identified as a solution to some of today's most pressing problems. Issues of concern being addressed by the Impact Hub span phenomena as diverse as environmental degradation, problems related to ageing (societies), food safety, global warming, poverty or social exclusion, to name but a few. 'Social entrepreneurship's thus produces new arguments about how issues of global concern can be effectively tackled through innovative and entrepreneurial solutions. The Impact Hub thereby ascribes itself the role of creating the conditions which eventually allow social enterprises and entrepreneurs to blossom. This involves, for instance, the provision of workshops, venture competitions, fellowship programs, prototyping sessions and spaces for 'creative breakout, brainstorming and co-working'. Underpinning the narratives of the Impact Hub is a fundamentally optimistic prospect: although it gets acknowledged that mankind is witnessing serious challenges, there is ostensibly no reason for despair as the entrepreneurial mechanisms, tools and solutions for 'prototyping the future of business' are already at hand. Offering a narrative that attributes a central role to the social change potential immanent to business initiatives, narratives of social entrepreneurship are perhaps less utopian than heterotopian insofar as they appeal to an already existing movement of prolific 'change-makers'. The ideal subject of social entrepreneurship gets envisioned as a purposive and inventive individual who aspires to lead a meaningful life by changing the way in which business is practiced. Such individualized stories of social entrepreneurship put in place a normative blueprint of the good (working) life which others can emulate. Yet, we must guard against the temptation of treating the plot of the individual entrepreneur as the only story transmitted by the Impact Hub, since the prospect of becoming a social entrepreneur is not exhausted by social atomism. Thus, to advance understanding of the minute and heterogeneous ideological regimes which inform the ideal subject of being a social entrepreneur, we use the next sections to illuminate how the Impact Hub beckons to individuals to become a particular kind of person.

Security Dimension

Security in Boltanski's account forms that part of an ideology which demonstrates how people's participation in a system such as capitalism provides security from existing vulnerabilities and impending risks. Arguably the ultimate risk associated with social entrepreneurship is failure (Scott & Teasdale, 2012). In policy and academic circles it has become commonplace to suggest that social entrepreneurs address the risk of failure by creating a sustainable revenue base. The prefix 'sustainable' thus chiefly alludes to revenues resulting from the application of market mechanisms (read earned income). Reflecting the market regime's emphasis on trading activities, the general thinking is that neither contributions by government nor by donors form a pertinent source of revenue for social entrepreneurs. Academic narratives are rife with discussions of how trading and earned-income strategies lead to financial self-sufficiency. In this way, trading activities represent the ultimate mechanism for making social enterprises "viable" (Anderson, Dees & Emerson, 2002). Interestingly, whilst academics frequently envision the market regime as an antidote to the looming 'death' of social enterprises, this argument does not correspond with the narrative of the Impact Hub. Since even though the Impact Hub makes frequent mention of business

(e.g. identifying business as a way of mobilizing otherwise untapped resources), it does not go as far as positioning market mechanisms and principles as a means for fending off risks. Indeed, a conspicuous feature of the Impact Hub's narrative is that it tends to give priority to social entrepreneurship's potential and promise rather than to its backsides, obstacles and risks. Before tracing arguments explicitly dealing with the potential of becoming a social entrepreneur further down, it should be noted here that issues pertaining to security are in fact part of the Impact Hub's narrative of social entrepreneur. Even though hard to detect on first sight, two relatively stable sets of arguments can be detected. The first argument links social entrepreneurship with innovativeness. Innovativeness is thereby delineated not only as the crucial mechanism for 'saving the world' (Sørensen, 2008), but as the pre-eminent means for securing the viability of the respective social enterprise. Arguments dealing with innovativeness often circulate around questions of which qualities, skills and abilities the social entrepreneur must possess so that a given idea, endeavor or enterprise can be protected from looming failure. The ideal subject implied in this story prefigures an individual who is attentive to novel opportunities and latent possibilities which only few others would be able to detect. Security is thus epitomized in the assumption that social entrepreneurs worth thinking of are precisely those who willingly accept that they must be innovative to ensure the survival of their ideas and organizations. Evidently, this imaginary reflects Boltanski's projective regime which heeds flexibility and adaptability on the part of the individual as the defining feature of security. Talk about innovativeness as a foundational attribute of the individual social entrepreneur also echoes the regime of inspiration whose central concern is the kind of creativity and originality being displayed by the individual.

This said, one should not ignore that innovativeness cannot possibly be reduced to the level of the individual. What is crucially at stake is, as the Impact Hub notes, that '[i]mpact cannot happen in isolation'. A second argument dealing with security is thus based upon the notion of 'collectiveness'. The collectivist dimension is most evident in text passages where the prospect of becoming a social entrepreneurship gets related to, for instance, the establishment of partnerships, participatory innovation processes, or quite generally to activities such as 'co-production' or 'sharing'. A vital dimension of the ideal subject is how the process of becoming a social entrepreneur involves assembling people into a coherent collective. Evidently, the idea of collectiveness points to Boltanski's domestic regime which avers that security can be achieved through adherence to values such as loyalty and trustworthiness. In line with the domestic regime, the Impact Hub makes is imperative to protect and care for the Hub collective, similar to how one would try to preserve one's own family.

This emphasis on collectivity is notable not least since it has been more or less absent in academic discussions, especially during the nascent stage of social entrepreneurship research (Dacin et al., 2011). Moreover, notions of 'collectiveness' are always already an affective construction, rather than an accurate and reliable description of reality. Since even though it would be easy to prove that collectiveness is not a bullet-proof antidote against entrepreneurial risks such as failure, the truly interesting point to note is how 'collectiveness' works affectively to convey the promise that individual social entrepreneurs cannot possibly fail precisely because they are part of a greater collective of like-minded people. It is hence by purporting that individuals are not left to their own devices that narratives of the Impact Hub get to offer individuals a 'foundational guarantee' (Glynos, 2008) that shields them from the

typical insecurities and risks related to entrepreneurial endeavors. Inherent in this view is the assumption of collectiveness being a means for achieving particular ends (i.e. security). Before proceeding, it should be borne in mind that collectiveness does not only form a means toward other ends, but is frequently positioned as an end in itself. We will add more flesh to this insight in conjunction with the discussion of the excitement dimension further down.

Whilst our analysis of the security dimension has revealed how narratives of social entrepreneurship hark back to the projective regime, the domestic regime and the regime of inspiration, the ensuing two sub-chapters will exemplify the role of further ideologies in setting up social entrepreneurship as an ideal subject

Fairness Dimension

Fairness involves arguments on how a certain way of life contributes to the public interest and the common good. In Boltanski's foundational work on the ideological justification of capitalism (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005), fairness plays an obvious role since it is not self-evident that an individual's participation in the capitalist economy will necessarily yield results that are beneficial for everyone. In the case of the Impact Hub, however, fairness is not a justification in the conciliatory sense of the term. In contrast to Boltanski's 'new spirit of capitalism', which tried to justify capitalism in the face of its negative ramifications such as exploitation, alienation, over-work, etc., the Impact Hub is not charged with such legitimization pressures precisely because fairness is not an addendum but the very essence of social entrepreneurship. Hence, instead of trying to vindicate social entrepreneurship in the face of negative evidence and criticism, the Impact Hub simply gives an account of how individuals, by becoming social entrepreneurs, contribute to the common good. Whilst the common good is illustrated in various ways, it gets signified quite frequently in conjunction with notions of social (and ecological) impact. Notions of 'impact' occur not only in the name of the intermediary (nomen est omen), but are also a central part of its incubator activities (see f.i. the Social Impact Award) as well as its official rhetoric. The idea of impact as it gets narrated by the Impact Hub epitomizes Boltanski's civic regime which heeds the rights of the collective and associated principles of solidarity and justice. On the other hand, narratives of 'impact' reveal similarities with the industrial regime which identifies as one of the most pressing tasks aspects of effectiveness, performance and productivity. These values are chiefly in line with academic and policy articulations which also use 'performance' as a "powerful element in the case for social entrepreneurship" (Martin, 2004, p. 14). An immediate clarification is in order here. Even though a spirit of 'getting things done' and a drive for performance at large are important components of the narrative of social entrepreneurship, perhaps one of the clearest effects of the Impact Hub's narratives is to undermine the idea of performance as it is understood in the context of strictly profit-driven enterprises. That is to say, squarely in contradiction with Boltanski's industrial regime which conceives of performance, productivity and efficiency against the background of traditional businesses, performance in the case of the Impact Hub takes on a much broader meaning. In concrete terms, performance brings with it a new logic of creation in which values of performance and efficiency are inextricably interlinked with the idea of the co-production of the common good. So understood, we can see that 'performance' in the Impact Hub's account effectively conjoins the industrial and the civic regime, thus essentially merging formerly contradictory logics of civicness and industrial production.

At closer inspection, an ambivalence at the heart of 'performance' comes into focus. Although the narratives of the Impact Hub are rife with discussions of how social enterprises and entrepreneurs engender social and ecological impact, the intermediary makes no secret that measuring such performances is anything but trivial. Though conceding that the production of solid evidence of social impact might prove challenging, the Impact Hub adopts a sanguine position by suggesting that what really matters is less the 'hard evidence' of impact but the individual's commitment to performance. The Impact Hub thus averts the potential charge of paying too little attention on measuring social impact by contending that what really matters is that individuals feel an urge to 'make a difference'. So, even though the classical management procedures as they relate to, for instance, strategizing, measurement and accountability are still implicated in the social entrepreneurial journey, the process of becoming a social entrepreneur gets delineated as being contingent on psychological factors such as dedication, motivation and passion, rather than on the application of measurable solutions. Bluntly put, the ideal subject emanating from this account does not produce an emphasis on 'real' performance but a psychological 'will to perform'. This image thus offers a very particular, and one-sided understanding of performance that homes in on the motivational factors of the individual, and thereby fails to acknowledge the pragmatic dimension of change endeavors.

Excitement Dimension

In Boltanski's account, excitement involves those justifications which seek to convince people of how their engagement in capitalism would animate and enliven them. We can trace several ways in which social entrepreneurship gets imagined as a source of excitement. For instance, the excitement involved in becoming a social entrepreneur is crucially related to an eschatological belief in the redemptive qualities of market logics and practices (Dey & Steyaert, 2010). As briefly discussed above, a sense of excitement is enacted through narratives stressing how the innovative deeds of the individual social entrepreneur ultimately benefit society as a whole. Similarly, a sense of excitement emanates through recourse to the notion of 'collectivitity' (cf. above) which invites us to think about the journey of becoming a social entrepreneurship in terms of 'sharing', 'collaborating', 'discussing', 'joining', etc. Having mentioned previously that collectivity forms an essential ingredient of the security dimension, it is in the context of the excitement dimension that the term takes on a slightly different meaning. That is, collectivity becomes a source excitement by way of how the experience of becoming a part of a global movement of like-minded people gets depicted as a teleology or end in its own right. Regardless of whether collectivity eventually permits the social entrepreneur to set up a viable enterprise, the mere act of becoming a member of the Impact Hub community is positioned as an end in itself.

A pervasive component of the excitement dimension of social entrepreneurship is how it emulates the regime of opinion, particularly its focus on honor and fame. What one is bound to see in narratives embodying a sense of excitement is how a career as a social entrepreneur involves becoming visible and recognizable in the public sphere through, for instance, award ceremonies, presentations or marketing and public relations activities. Perhaps the dominant regime in conjuring a sense of excitement is the inspired regime, which values the passion and creativity of the individual genius. However, this is not entirely accurate. A focal attention of the inspired regime in Boltanski's account is full commitment to the risks of one's enterprise

and an acceptance of all the costs a given journey might entail. In contrast thereto, the narrative of the Impact Hub does not contain any mention of, for instance, hardship and obstacles which might occur in the social entrepreneurial journey. Succinctly put, the Impact Hub purports that becoming a social entrepreneur does not necessarily presuppose any sacrifices on the part of the individual. A sense excitement emerges precisely due to how narratives eclipse all those experiences of hardship and suffering which might prevent people from embarking upon a career as a social entrepreneur. Consequently, excitement results from the suggestion that the realization of the common good does not necessarily require that people fully dedicate their lives to their social entrepreneurial endeavor, thus potentially exposing themselves to risks of self-exploitation or exhaustion (cf. Dempsey & Sanders, 2010). Quite the contrary, the Impact Hub's stories of progress which sketch out how social entrepreneurs use business tools to shape the future is criss-crossed by a narrative which promotes social entrepreneurship as a genuinely pleasurable experience in the 'here and now'. The Impact Hub thereby displaces the traditional opposition between the sphere of work (which embodies values and virtues such as duty, obligation or responsibility) and the idea of enjoyment (which is mainly seen as part of the experience of leisure time). Examples can be found in descriptions which equate the process of becoming a social entrepreneur with the experience of 'being inspired', 'assessing creative energy' and connecting with 'compassionate individuals focused on a common purpose'. On the face of it, narratives of social entrepreneurship as an experience of enjoyment effectively supersedes the linear (and dare we say 'reductionist') narrative of social entrepreneurship as a way of using business management to advance the common good. The lynchpin of the Impact Hub's narrative is the conviction that becoming a social entrepreneur allows individuals to 'have fun'. In essence, becoming a social entrepreneur renders the individual's life meaningful not necessarily by connecting it to a higher cause but by transforming it into a hedonistic journey. Participation in a social entrepreneurial career is hence presented not merely as a 'higher calling' (Dempsey & Sanders, 2010), but as a potential source of affective enlightenment. The narrative of the Impact Hub compels the individual to become a social entrepreneur by exemplifying the kind of emotional experiences she or he can reap from such an engagement. In this way, the ideal subject gets envisioned as an individual whose engagement as a social entrepreneur is primarily driven by the prospect of pleasurable experiences. This imaginary in turn subordinates a more thoroughgoing debate on ethical and political issue of social change to the imperative of enjoyment. It is to this conundrum that we turn in the next section.

The Promise of Enjoyment and the Depoliticizing Social Entrepreneurship

It is obvious from what has just been said that social entrepreneurship cannot possibly be regarded as a mere mimesis of the triumph of the market (Dart, 2004) since the ideal subject being revealed in our analysis clearly exceeds common understandings of business as a form of organizing with primarily economic finalities. At heart, becoming a social entrepreneur purportedly opens up a new way of doing business, which for its success requires innovativeness and a 'will to perform' on the part of the individual. It is here that we can trace an important tension of social entrepreneurship. On the one hand, social entrepreneurship represents a deeply individualistic undertaking. Conversely, the ideal subject entails notions of collectiveness, which takes its ideological cues from the domestic regime and its associated values of loyalty and trustworthiness which are characteristic of the family. To complexify

things even further, our results indicate that the ideal subject embodies – although to a different degree – all of the seven ideological regimes described by Boltanski. Despite the apparent heterogeneity on the level of ideological meanings, narratives of social entrepreneurship are eventually united by an affective core. This 'core' consists of how the prospect of becoming a social entrepreneur gets depicted as an essentially pleasurable experience. More precisely, one of the key features of the ideal subject is that it combines a sense of urgency with the possibility of enjoyment. Conflating more traditional notions of 'performance', 'scaling' or 'impact' with affectively charged terms such as 'inspiration' or 'being energized', the narrative of the Impact Hub shapes the understanding of social entrepreneurship in ways that are amenable not only to the logic of the market regime but also to what could be called 'hedonistic regime'.

The coalescence of the trajectories of 'doing good' and 'having fun' is interesting not least in light of recent debates on social entrepreneurship as a source of 'meaningful work'. In a nutshell, there is a tentative consensus that social entrepreneurship offers individuals a meaningful work prospect based upon values such as, for instance, integrity, empathy, spirituality, compassion or honesty (e.g. Mort, Weerawardena & Carnegie, 2003). A conspicuous aspect of this debate is that it has concerned itself mainly with explicitly moral virtues. In contrast thereto, the figure of the social entrepreneur emanating from the narrative of the Impact Hub makes no distinction between virtues of 'doing good' and egotistical intentions of 'having fun'. Cast as an inherently pleasurable endeavor, getting immersed in a career as a social entrepreneur marks less a fulfillment of some higher purpose than a hedonistic injunction to enjoy. Before we get to problematize the hedonistic regime further down, it is important to first note that the promise of enjoyment results, at least in part, from how the Impact Hub avoids any detailed discussion of the struggles and hardship associated with social entrepreneurship or the underlying political and structural causes of today's most pressing problems (Fyke & Buzzanell, 2013). This avoidance of the intricacies and predicaments of social entrepreneurship is a precondition for rendering social entrepreneurship a career prospect which appears attractive and which individuals can hence embrace.

Together, these insights urge us to address the broader implications of the Impact Hub's account of social entrepreneurship as an ideal subject. Perhaps the most conspicuous feature of the Impact Hub's narrative is that it precipitates a shift away from seeing social change mainly as an undertaking informed by tangible ethical or political objectives. Indeed, the hedonistic interpretation of the ideal subject diverts attention from seeing social change as predicated upon antagonistic, confrontational engagements with practices and belief systems of the dominant political economy. To be sure, we are not suggesting that the Impact Hub a priori excludes social entrepreneurial start-ups with explicitly political ambitions and missions. Even a cursory glance at the homepages of the different Impact Hubs will reveal that political social enterprises, such as advocacy organizations which try to raise awareness for silenced societal issues (such as HIV amongst young adults), are part of the intermediary's portfolio. Our concern is thus related more to how official narratives of the Impact Hub exclude the political underpinning of social enterprises by glossing over the fact that any attempt at producing change, even if based on ostensibly 'neutral' market mechanisms, are inherently political insofar as they (aspire to) alter existing social orders and relations of power.

To put things into broader perspective, we can see that the hedonistic regime and its promise of enjoyment, which was not yet part of Boltanski's elaborate treatise, reflects recent ideological shifts which have taken place in many advanced liberal societies. More precisely, the promise of enjoyment which is at the heart of the Impact Hub's narrative of social entrepreneurship is an exemplary example of the passage from a 'society of prohibition' to a 'society of commanded enjoyment' (McGowan (2004, p. 2). This imperative to enjoy reflects the ideological desideratum of consumer society, and thus prefigures a rather new mode of individual conduct and social production. Until very recently, a pervasive feature of social organization was that people were required to renounce enjoyment, for enjoyment formed a risk to the stability of the society. What McGowan refers to as 'societies of prohibition' echoes Max Weber's notion of the protestant ethic as an ideological system which normalized an ethos of hard work, asceticism and a renouncement of private pleasures. In this universe, the imperative is to abstain from all forms of enjoyment during one's worldly life. Today, this logic has been firmly put on its head: the primary duty of the subject in consumer society is no longer to renounce enjoyment but to enjoy as much as possible (Stavrakakis, 2010). In today's societies of commanded enjoyment, which in McGowan's view characterizes the era of late capitalism, the proper life no longer consists of sacrificing enjoyment for the sake of social order, but precisely to free oneself from values such as self-control, moderation, restraint and hard work (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005), and to identify hedonistic pleasures as the categorical imperative. Whilst it is not difficult to see that the Impact Hub's narrative of social entrepreneurship corresponds, in an almost perfect sense, with what has just been said about the society of commanded enjoyment, it is particularly important to attend to the dangers associated with this nexus. Ultimately, the culture of 'having fun' strips social entrepreneurship of much of its progressive value. The strong ambition to attain social change does not disappear from narratives of social entrepreneurship, but takes on a de-politicized form by moving from a focus on struggle, opposition and antagonism to a range of non-confrontational practices and initiatives. In this way, the Impact Hub tends to normalize a view of social entrepreneurship that does not open up 'new worlds', but mainly fosters a superficial engagement with reality. The imagery of social entrepreneurship being created by the Impact Hub ultimately risks engendering a 'worldless' ideological constellation (Žižek & Badiou, 2005), which deprives would-be social entrepreneurs of any sense of the political and ethical urgencies which require attention.

Concluding Thoughts

The possibilities for progressive social change have underpinned many recent debates in Management and Organization Theory in general and Business Ethics more specifically. Social entrepreneurship takes centre stage in these debates. It is thus fairly uncontroversial to claim that few concepts have been as successful in vying for the attention of academic, media professional or politicians (Fyke & Buzzanell, 2013). However, one should not be seduced into believing that social entrepreneurship has remained unscathed. The truth is that the subject matter has been subjected to various forms of critique. At least a few of those critiques have used theories of ideology to pinpoint the true reality which is hidden behind the veneer of euphoria produced by spectacular representations of social entrepreneurship (Mason & Moran, forthcoming). Although we generally embrace critical research on social entrepreneurship, we also believe that existing ideological analyses might have too readily

reduced social entrepreneurship to a singular value: the market logic. The principle concern of this article has been to show that although social entrepreneurship signifies the increasing reliance on market mechanisms and practices as a preferred way of instigating social change, it would still be untenable to suggest that social entrepreneurship is a mono-logical creation. Whilst the principle purpose of our investigation was to challenge the 'dominant ideology' thesis exemplified at the outset of this paper (cf. Dart, 2004), three insights merit particular attention.

First, and directly related to what has just been said, a key contribution which our investigation of the Impact Hub makes is to demonstrate that social entrepreneurship is 'over-determined' (Althusser, 2005) in the sense of being shaped by multiple ideologies. Having disclosed how the narration of social entrepreneurship as an ideal subject balances a variety of ideologies, our findings have made it evident that social entrepreneurship ultimately represents a "Wittgensteinian 'family' of vaguely connected and heterogeneous [ideological] procedures" (Žižek, 1994, p. 67). Having offered a 'first cut' at understanding the polymorphous ideological foundation of social entrepreneurship, Boltanski's work has been instrumental for gaining a better understanding of how intermediary organizations narrate social entrepreneurship as an ideal subject via different ideological regimes which offer specific justifications as to what it means to lead a virtuous (working) life. Whilst many ideological regimes being invoked by the Impact Hub have a very long history (Boddice, 2009), our inquiry raises some interesting issues about the notorious debate around social entrepreneurship's status of novelty. In light of our findings, it appears that most ideologies being employed in the narratives of the Impact Hub are historical rather than new. What might be new, though, is the way in which the different ideological regimes are combined and interwoven into a relatively stable assemblage of meaning. Specifically, the Impact Hub has offered interesting insights with regard to how 'social entrepreneurship' gets used to forge links between values which hitherto seemed incompatible. Perhaps the most revealing example involves how the prospect of becoming a social entrepreneur conflates traditional notions of doing business with hedonistic values of enjoyment. This said, we are mindful that further research is needed to add both detail and nuance to our understanding of how intermediaries interweave different ideological registers in practice.

Second, a key insight of our investigation is that ideology does not work primarily to conceal and obscure, but to make the ideal subject of the social entrepreneur as palatable to as many people as possible. Recent affect-based theorizing on ideology has put us in a better position to understand how narratives of social entrepreneurship are structured through fantasies, thus eventually rendering social entrepreneurship an appealing career prospect for the individual. Essentially, our findings contribute to ongoing efforts to understand the ideological mechanisms which normalize specific views of what makes work and life meaningful. The Impact Hub serves as a paradigmatic example of a fundamental shift in how work is presented not only as necessary (e.g. as a way of securing income), but as attractive and exciting. Importantly, social entrepreneurship does not so much offer a moralized blueprint of meaningful (work) life (read a 'higher calling'; cf. Dempsey & Sanders, 2010), but a hedonistic culture of 'having fun'. By implication, our investigation draws attention to how attempts at persuading individuals to become social entrepreneurs comprise an affective side. Although much of this might appear self-evident, which, however, only testifies to how habituated we have become to the affective grip of the rhetoric of intermediary organizations,

one must not forget that the promise of enjoyment might eventually be the driving motif behind individuals' decision to become social entrepreneurs. A pressing task for future research hence consists of directly addressing the specific motives and desires of would-be social entrepreneurs, placing heed on the extent to which these individuals are drawn into a social entrepreneurial career solely due to of hedonistic considerations.

Third, having demonstrated that the conflation of social change and the culture of 'having fun' eventually forecloses the properly political, our findings compel us to make room for "alternative views which are often in conflict with the wave of euphoria and optimism that is driving current theoretical development in the field of social enterprise and entrepreneurship" (Bull, 2008, p. 272). Because even though some commentators have suggested that the promise of enjoyment creates a sense of possibility which is conducive to political action (e.g. Gibson-Graham, 2006), we feel that the hedonistic rendition of social entrepreneurship merely gives rise to a sense of empty 'pleasure'. Any ambition to counter-act this stalemate by enlivening the political dimension of social entrepreneurship prompts intriguing questions as to how, i.e. based upon which alternative ideologies, social entrepreneurship should be rearticulated. Having reached a decisive point in our argument, we must not be tempted to make hasty decisions with regard to the positive content of social entrepreneurship. Crucial here is again the status of ideology. As a general rule, whenever we aspire to suggest alternative meanings of social entrepreneurship, chances are that we simply exchange one ideology with another, thus potentially perpetuating the problem we set out to solve in the first place (Daly, 2004). Given that there is no space beyond ideology and the fantasies which sustain it, it might make little sense to try to dictate in an authoritative fashion what social entrepreneurship should be in terms of its positive content. Instead, it might prove more productive to engage in a critical practice of nonclosure (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). Such a practice should be geared toward keeping the field of signification open by destabilizing the seeming wholeness and 'coziness' of dominant accounts of social entrepreneurship. Revealing how affect works to create the illusion of harmony, being critical of social entrepreneurship is, on the one hand, about dismantling the false promise of enjoyment and, on the other, about learning to embrace a different kind of enjoyment (Stavrakakis, 2010) by establishing social entrepreneurship as "a utopia which [...] gains jouissance [enjoyment] of impossibility itself" (McMillan, 2012, p. 177). The idea of impossibility, which is at the core of Žižek's (2006) political philosophy, invites us to re-think social entrepreneurship not as something which is de facto impossible. Practically speaking, such a demand would make little sense. Following Žižek, the duty is to relate social entrepreneurship with demands that profoundly challenge the dominant social imaginary. Re-politicizing social entrepreneurship thus involves a passage from impossibility to contingency so that "what appeared impossible, what did not belong to the domain of possibilities, all of a sudden – contingently – takes place, and thus transforms the coordinates of the entire field" (Žižek, 2006, p.77). A central concern for future research should be to engage directly with intermediary organization, thus asking fundamental questions as to how social entrepreneurship can be rethought as a force that explodes the limits of the possible.

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